

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 EUR-12 IO-13 SS-15 VO-05
CA-01 INSE-00 L-03 AID-05 CIAE-00 SY-05 SSO-00
NSCE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 /085 W
-----008005 180158Z /70

O 180030Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4272
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 4302

BANGKOK PASS TO REF COORD BARNES

HONG KONG PASS TO INS DIDIR

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, MY
SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTS

REF: A) STATE 113713 (PARA 6), B) KUALA LUMPUR 3678 (PARA 8)
C) KUALA LUMPUR 3576

1. IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES (REF B) DESIGNED TO PREVENT REFUGEE
VESSELS FROM LEAVING PULAU TENGAH REFUGEE CAMP, JOHORE, MALAYSIA,
FOR DARWIN, REF: OPS AND INS PERSONNEL VISITED PULAU TENGAH ON MAY
6. THEY WERE ACCOMPANIED BY AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION O.I.C.,
MALAYSIA.

2. UPON ARRIVAL, AUSTRALIAN INTERVIEWED 93 PERSONS, ALL MEMBERS
ONELARGE EXTENDED FAMILY, WHO WERE THREATENING TO LEAVE PULAU
TENGAH, ABOARD TWO BOATS, FOR DARWIN. BOATS' NUMBERS ARE
VNKG-0793 AND VNKG-0928.

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3. AUSTRALIAN OFFICER AGREED TO ADMIT 20-30 OF EXTENDED FAMILY
AS THEY SEEMED TO QUALIFY UNDER PROGRAM CRITERIA. FAMILY
MATRIARCH REPLIED THAT IF AUSTRALIANS DID NOT ACCEPT ALL 93
FAMILY MEMBERS, THEY WOULD REBOARD BOATS AND LEAVE FOR DARWIN.
ON NEXT TIDE. COMMENT: VIET FAMILY HAD UNSHAKEABLE CONVICTION
THAT ONCE LANDED IN AUSTRALIA THEY WILL BE GIVEN FARMLAND ADE-

QUATE TO PROVIDE LIVING FOR WHOLE EXTENDED FAMILY GROUP. END COMMENT.

4. AUSTRALIAN OFFICER SAID SHE REFUSED TO BE BLACKMAILED AND TURNED TO U.S. TEAM FOR ASSISTANCE. U.S. TEAM TOLD HER THAT WE WOULD ACCEPT ALL 93 FOR U.S. IN HOPES OF STOPPING VOYAGE TO DARWIN. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH REF: OPS PERSONNEL FULLY AWARE OF IMPLICATION OF DECISION TO ACCEPT FAMILY, I.E., FUTURE THREATS TO LEAVE FOR DARWIN IF U.S. DOES NOT ACCEPT REFUGEE GROUPS OUTRIGHT, IT WAS FELT THAT OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING AUSTRALIANS IN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM OUTWEIGHED OTHER CONSIDERATIONS. END COMMENT.

5. WHEN U.S. BEGAN TO CALL IN 93 VIETS FOR INTERVIEWS, NONE APPEARED. IT TURNED OUT THAT MATRIARCH HAD DECIDED ON AUSTRALIA ALONE AND WOULD NOT CONSIDER U.S. OFFER. FAMILY BEGAN PACKING BAGS AND FITTING OUT BOATS FOR VOYAGE.

6. AUSTRALIAN OFFICER REMONSTRATED WITH FAMILY WELL INTO NIGHT AND WAS ASSISTED BY J.S. J.V.A. MAN OF VAST EXPERIENCE WITH INDOCHINESE. GIST OF AUSTRALIAN ARGUMENT: I WOULDN'T WALK INTO YOUR HOUSE, UNINVITED, AND ANNOUNCE I AM STAYING PERMANENTLY; DON'T WALK INTO MINE. REFUGEE MATRIARCH ONLY GRINNED AT ANALOGY.

7. AUSTRALIANS AND J.V.R. FINALLY CONVINCED REFUGEES TO POSTPONE DEPARTURE FOR WEEK WHILE CANBERRA WAS CABLED FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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INSTRUCTION.

8. POLITICAL OFFICER FROM AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION ON PULAU TENGAH ALONG WITH EMBOFF AND JVA FOR FOREGOING PROCEEDINGS. HE THANKED U.S. TEAM AND TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE HAD RECOMMENDED AN "ONGOING INDOCHINESE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM."

9. UPON RETURN FROM EAST COAST EMB/INS TOUR ON 15 MAY, EMBOFF CALLED AUSTRALIAN TEAM LEADER TO ASK WHAT HAD BEEN RESOLVED REGARDING FAMILY OF 93. AUSTRALIAN REPLIED THAT ALL 93 REFUGEES WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY AUSTRALIA OVER NEXT SIX MONTHS. EMBOFF AGAIN EMPHASIZED THAT U.S. WILLING TO TAKE ACTIONS NECESSARY TO PREVENT BOATS FROM LEAVING MALAYSIA FOR DARWIN.

10. AUSTRALIAN OFFICER WENT ON TO INFORM EMBOFF INFORMALLY THAT CANBERRA HAD INSTRUCTED HER TEAM TO "CONTINUE ACCEPTANCES, AT PRESENT RATE," AFTER COMPLETION OF PRESENT PROGRAM. (PRESENT RATE OF AUSTRALIAN DEPARTURES PEGGED, OFFICIALLY, AT 120 PER WEEK.) WHEN ASKED WHAT THIS MEANT, AUSTRALIAN OFFICER SAID SHE WAS NOT SURE BUT, AS HER TEAM IS BEING AUGMENTED BY AN ADDITIONAL OFFICER, SHE THOUGHT THAT DEPARTURES MAY CONTINUE AT 120 PER WEEK UNTIL TEAM'S

SCHEDULED RETURN TO AUSTRALIA IN LATE DECEMBER.

11. AS FOREGOING CABLE WAS BEING TYPED, POLITICAL OFFICER OF AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION WALKED INTO EMBASSY REFUGEE OFFICE AND ANNOUNCED NEW AUSTRALIAN PROGRAM. OFFICER SAID THAT AUSTRALIAN CABINET HAS DECIDED TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAM WHICH WILL ADMIT NINE THOUSAND REPEAT NINE THOUSAND INDHOCHINESE REFUGEES INTO AUSTRALIA FROM JUNE OF 1978 UNTIL JUNE 1979. QUOTA IS FOR REGION AND WILL, OF COURSE, INCLUDE LAND REFUGEE CASES. OFFICER SAID THAT CABINET DECISION IS FIRM.
MILLER

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